

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

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Public Health Officer Says Supply of H1N1 Flu Vaccine is Limited in San Bernardino County

SAN BERNARDINO - There has been a limited supply of H1N1 influenza vaccine in San Bernardino County, due to a delay in the national production and distribution process. There are insufficient quantities of all the vaccine formulas, so it is shipped as it becomes available from the manufacturer. Local health care providers are placing orders through the system established by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Vaccine is allocated to each area in proportion to its population, but delivery has been unpredictable.

"The public will be notified, and the vaccine will be distributed to eligible groups, as soon as supplies arrive in the County," emphasized County Public Health Officer, Maxwell Ohikhuare, M.D. He noted that "the only H1N1 influenza vaccine available in the County at this time, is intranasal FluMist, which has a live but weakened form of the virus." People who are encouraged to get this vaccine include:

- Healthy children two to 18 years of age
 - Especially those younger than ten (10) years who are recommended to get two doses (30 days apart), and
- Healthy household contacts (two to 49 years of age) that take care of infants less than six (6) months of age.

Individuals in the priority groups listed above can get the vaccine through some health care providers, or at a Public Health clinic by calling 1 (800) 722-4777, to make an appointment.

Ohikhuare cautioned that "we may not have enough vaccine for everyone who wants it until January 2010, depending on the accessibility through the government." At this time, priority is being given to groups who are at highest risk for complications if they are infected with the H1N1 virus.

He recommended that "meanwhile, each of us can take an active part in reducing the risks of getting infected with a flu virus." Ohikhuare's live-well strategies to fight the flu include:

- Cough and sneeze into a tissue or your elbow. Dispose of the tissue after use.
-more-

MARK UFFER
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- Wash your hands often with soap and water and/or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Stay home from work or school and limit contact with others if you have flu-like symptoms.
- If you become infected with influenza, wait at least 24 hours after the fever subsides without the use of fever-reducing medications, before going back to work or school.

Call a health care provider when symptoms are serious, like trouble breathing, or chest pain.

For the most up-to-date information on H1N1 or seasonal influenza, visit the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health website at www.sbcounty.gov/dph, or call 1 (800) 782-4264. More useful resources are also available through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website at <http://www.flu.gov/>.

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